

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Department of the Interior
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Florida Keys National
Wildlife Refuge Complex
179 Key Deer Blvd
Big Pine Key, FL 33043

News Release



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National Key Deer Refuge Establishes Medication Stations for Backcountry Key Deer Population

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) and Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) wildlife veterinarians continue to work to select the best techniques for administering screwworm preventative treatments to healthy Key deer. To date, most of the over 1000 preventative treatment doses of the anti-parasitic Doramectin have been administered on Big Pine Key with the help of over 170 refuge volunteers assisting Service employees.

While 75% of the Key deer population lives on Big Pine and No Name Keys, Service employees and our partners are also looking at techniques to administer preventative treatment to the herd found in some of the more rural parts of the Keys. These backcountry deer are harder to locate than those in more urban environments. In order to administer doses to this herd, Service employees are utilizing a different technique. Eleven individual medication stations have been created in-house and strategically distributed by Service staff on Cudjoe, Sugarloaf, and Big Pine Keys. These medication stations are located along heavily used deer trails on remote sections of the refuge. Deer are enticed to the medication stations by sweet feed, which mainly consists of oats, various grains, and cracked corn. Wildlife veterinarians have set up a self-applicating roller system, four rollers on each side, which apply a topical anti-parasitic medication to the deer's neck as it lowers its head to feed on limited amounts of sweet feed.

For safety, please stay on designated refuge trails, keep pets on leashes, and do not approach medication station sites. If you have any pet concerns, please contact your local veterinarian. Sites are checked daily to monitor activity of Key deer and to ensure other animals are not getting into the medication station sites.

For more information, please contact Public Information, 305-906-1355,
USFWSscrewwormInfo@gmail.com and follow Refuge updates on our website and Facebook page:
www.fws.gov/refuge/National_Key_Deer_Refuge/
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The National Wildlife Refuge System protects wildlife and wildlife habitat on more than 150 million acres of land and water from the Caribbean to the Pacific, Maine to Alaska. Refuges also improve human health, provide outdoor recreation, and support local economies. Visit our home page at <http://www.fws.gov/refuges/>.

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals, and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit <http://www.fws.gov/>.